

A
**PARAPHRASE
AND
EXPOSITION**
of the Prophesie of
SAINT PETER,

Concerning the day of CHRIST's
second Coming;

Described in the third Chapter of his
second EPISTLE.

AS ALSO,
How the CONFLAGRATION, or De-
struction of the WORLD by fire, (whereof
Saint Peter speaks) and especially of
the HEAVENS, is to be
understood.

B Y
JOSEPH MEDDE, B. D. late Fellow of
Christs Colledge in Cambridg.

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A
PARAPHRASE
AND
EXPOSITION
OF THE GOSPEL OF
SAINT MATTHEW.

Concerning the day of Christ's
Second Coming.

Concerning the timing of Christ's
Second Coming.

Matthew 24:4

How the Coming of Christ will be
when the Son of man (Matthew
24:36) has the power of
the Son of man to do what he
wishes.

Concerning Matthew 24:4, the following:

The coming of Christ will be sudden.

Matthew 24:4

Concerning Matthew 24:4, the following:



A PARAPHRASE AND EXPOSITION

of the Prophesie of
SAIN T P E T E R,
Concerning the day of C H R I S T S second
Coming.

On the third Chapter of the Second
EPISTLE.

Verse 1, 2.

Saint Peter ex-
horts the belie-
ving Jews, unto
whom he writes
to be mindful of
the words of the holy Prophets,
(a) Esay, Daniel, & Malachi,
concerning the coming of Christ to judgment, & the restora-
tion then promised, it being also confirmed by the Apostles of
our Lord and Savior.

(a) **I**F that which St. Peter
here describeth were
foretold by the old Pro-
phets, then must Saint Peter
be so expounded, as it may
be shewen in them, and a-
gree with them.

Verse. 3,4.

For howsoever it were then
believed both by Jews & Chri-
stened Gentiles, yet in the last
dayes should come those, who
walking after their own de-
sires (or humours) should deny
and deride the expectation of
my such promise (b) of that
day of Christ, saying, Where is
the promise (c) of his coming?
Where is the new heaven and
new earth you talk of?

which Christ was to come, and found his Church and Kingdome: So the latter times of the fourth Kingdome, being the period of a time, times, and halfe a time, wherein the wicked horne should domineere, are the latemost times of the last times, or last times in speciaall.

(c) I take Promise here for res promissa, the antithesis implying that to be the meaning, viz. The scoffers say, Where is the promise of his coming? Neverthelesse we look for a new heauen, and a new earth, according to his promise. But here is somewhat, (Reader) in the application wherein thou maist erre; but be not thou uncharitable in thy censure, nor thinke that I am. For although the crying down and condemning the opinion of the Chiliasm, will be found to be neere upon the beginning of the times of the Antichristian Apostasie, (which I suppose to be called the last times;) and that the utter burying of that opinion falls within these times: yet thou must know, first, That there is not the like reason of the first. Authors of crying down a truth,

(b) This ἡμέραι τῶν ἡμερῶν, or last dayes, should seem to be the time of the Churches Apostasie under Antichrist, according to that of Saint Paul, 1 Tim. 4.1. In the latter times same shall depart from the faith, giving heed to spirits of errore, & doctrines of demons. For as the times of the fourth and last of Daniels Kingdoms were the last times in general, during

truth, and of those, who led by their authority, make it afterwards, without further examination, for an errour. Secondly, to scoffe, is one thing, and barely not to be leseye, is another. Thirdly, it is one thing to deny a promise simply, and another to deny and question the manner thereof: as also, to reject a truth sincerely propounded, and when it is entangled with errors, as that of the latter Chiliasm may seeme to have been.

Verse A. pars altera.

The reason of this their unbelief being, because they imagine, there hath never yett since the creation of the world, been any example of such a destruction and change ensuing it, as this at the coming of Christ should be. For since the Fathers fel asleep (say they) even since Adam died, althings have continued as they were from the beginning of the creation. Therefore the expectation of any such change of the world, & the state of things therein (as is supposed) is vain and frivilous, and never to be fulfilled.

nion and tradition of the renovation of the world. After this time there appears to have been amongst the Jews a sect of the followers of the opinion of this R. Samuel, which at length was greatly advanced by the authority of

Touching the Jews, and the impeachment of this opinion amongst them in the latest times, I find amongst the Doctors of the Gemara, or glosse of their Talmud, which was finished about 500 years after Christ, a sentence of one R. Samuel, or perhaps R. Shmuel ben Yoseph, in Hebrew: *כל הדולות רשות מלביבות בלב*: That there was to be no difference between the present state of the world, and the dayes of Messiah, but in regard of the bondage under the kingdoms of the Gentiles onely; thereby opposing the more ancient opinion

learned Maimonides, who having drunk too deep of the Philosophy of Aristotle, (wherein he was admirably skillfull) became a champion against the opinion of the worlds renovation to be in the dayes of Messiah; and that upon this ground, *Quod mundus retinet & sequitur consuetudinem suam*; which saying he ascribeth to some other Rabbins of the same opinion before him, which for the sense and meaning is the self same with that here of the scoffers: *All things (say they) continue, as they were from the beginning of the creation.* Nevertheless Aben Ezra, who lived not long after Maimonides, maintained still (as also others did) the contrary; & there are extant certain discourses and tractates amongst them, purposely written of this argument, and confuting the opinion of Rambam and his followers; as one called *שכינן הארץ* cæli novi, proving the necessity of the renovation of the world, and directed against cap. 29. lib. 2. of Maimonides his *More Nebochim*. Another by R. Isaac Abarbinel, *הנילוֹת נספְלָתוֹן* Opera Det, (out of Psal. 66.5.) wherein all the arguments brought against the renovation are confuted. And no doubt there are more of the like nature, which we know not of.

Verse 5,6.

But those who suppose this (το τελονε) that there hath never yet any such destruction or change befallen the creation, and thence conclude, there is nor shall such ever be; they weigh and consider not the universal deluge in the time of Noah, (when the curses laid upon the creature for mans sin

first

first solemnly tooke place,) brought as a like destruction, so a like change upon the world for the degeneration of the creature; as this at the second coming of Christ shall be for the restoration or renovation of the same in the glorious liberty of the children of God. For the heavens were of old, and the globe of the earth, consisting partly (εξ νερου) of water, viz. that of the great deep; & partly (σι νερον) amongst (d) water, to wit, the clouds and flood-gates of heaven hanging about it, all framed by the word of God: By the which waters (σι νερων) the world which then was, being overwhelmed with water, perished; as it is written Gen. 7.11. seq. in the 600. yeer of Noahs life, in the second moneth, in the seventeenth day of the month were al the fountains of the great deep broken up, & vers. 18. add the waters; & 21. and all flesh died.

Verse 7. But the heavens and the earth (i.e. the world) which is now,

(a) videlicet the inferior world
which has no relation to the sun
and stars, though it contains
many of them, and the upper world
of dry ground has relation
thereto, & to the sun, & to the
stars, & to the moon, &c. &c.
(b) And sometimes signifies
inter, amongst, or in the midst
of, as if it were surrounded: So
Herodotus, οι πολιορκηται
insularis. Howsoever we ren-
der the Preposition, I sup-
pose S. Peter by his νερον
means the superiour water,
which together with that of
the sea, or great deep, con-
curred to the drowning of
the world, as appears by the
place of Gen. 7. is alleged.

8. But the world which is now
has been created by the word
of God, & is made
to serve unto the new creation.

by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire (c) at the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men, according to the Prophecie of Daniel, c. 7. who saw a fiery stream issuing and coming forth before the Judge of the world, & the body of the fourth beast burned therewith: And of Esay, c. 66. who saith of that day, That the Lord shall come with fire, & with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebukes with flames of fire: And that by fire and by his sword, (i.e. by his sword of fire, i. said soon) the Lord would plead with all flesh, and the slain of the Lord shall be many. So also Malachy cap. 4. That the great and terrible day shall burn as an oven, and all the proud, and all that do wickedly shall be stubble, which at the coming of that day (P) shall be burnt up.

Verse 8.

But wheras I mentioned (saith Saint Peter) the day of judgment, lest ye might mistake it

(e) From this proportion which the judgment to come by fire, hath unto that which was by water in the deluge, Trenaeus calls it Diluvium ignis, lib. 5. c. 29. juxta edit. Fevardestr. It may be it is of this day that the Prophet Esay also speaks, cap. 9. 5. where he saith, that the battel of the Messiah should not be as the battel of the warrior, with

for

for a short day, or a day of few hours, I would not, Beloved, have you ignorant, that one day (g) with the Lord is as a thousand yeers, & a thousand yeers as one day. on both confused noise, and garments rolled in blood; but with burning and fuel of fire. For the old Prophets for the most part speak of the coming of Christ indefinitely and in general, without that distinction of first and second coming, which the Gospel out of Daniel hath more clearly taught us: And so consequently they speake of the things to be at Christs coming indefinitely and altogether, which we who are now more fully informed by the Revelation of the Gospel, of a twofold coming, must apply each of them to his proper time: those things which befit the state of his first coming, unto it; and such things as befit the state of his second coming, to the second; and what befits both alike, may be applyed unto both.

(g) Thus I expound these words by way of pre-occupation or premunition, because they are the formal words of the Jewish Doctors, when they speak of the day of judgment, or day of Christ, as Saint Peter here doth, *viz.* *בָּרוּךְ יְהוָה נִזְמָן עַד־יְמֵינוֹ ut dies hesternus* *sicut mille anni.* And though they use to quote that of the ninth Psalm, (*mille anni in oculis tuis ut dies hesternus*) for confirmation thereof, yet are not these words formally in the Psalm. So that St. Peter in this passage seems rather to have had respect to that common saying of the Jews in this argument, than to the words of the Psalm; where the words (*one day with the Lord is as a thousand years*) are not, though the latter part of the sentence (*a thousand years as one day*) may allude thither; as the Jews also were wont to bring it, for a confirmation of the former. ² These words are commonly taken as an argument, why God should not be

thought slack in his promise (which follows in the next verse: But the first Fathers took it otherwise; and besides, it proveth it not: for the question is not, whether the time be long or short in respect of God; but whether it be long or short in respect of us; otherwise not 1000, but 100000 years are in the eyes of God no more than one day is to us, and so it would not seem long to God, if the day of judgment should be deferred till then.) Let the judicious consider it , whether this passage so prone to be taken in the exposition I have given, yea, and alledged to that purpose, were not some part of a motive to the zealous Anti-Chiliaists (whereof *Eusebius*, whom we trust was none of the least) to be so willing and ready to question the authority of this Epistle, as they did also at the same time of the *Apocalyps*. The pretence against this Epistle was, that it wanted the testimonie of allegation by the first Fathers. But (*Dies Domini sicut mille anni*) quoted both by *Justin Martyr* and *Irenaeus*, is not out of the ninth Psalm, as they took for granted, (for there are no such words, but out of the Epistle of Peter, who applyeth it to the day of judgment, which he calleth *Dies Domini, in ipsa Xvij*: Consider it.

Verse 9.

And though this day be deferred, yet is the Lord not slack concerning his promise, (as some men account slackness, as if he had alter'd his purpose, or meant never to performe it,) but the cause of this delay, is his long-suffering (a) towards the seed of the seed of Israel, not with (a) Saine Peter speaks and writes in this Epistle to his
ling

ling that any should perish at that day, but that the whole nation should come unto repen-
tance, (b) which, if that day should surprize them in their unbelief, must inevitably perish with the rest of the en-
emies of Christ.

brethren the Jewes, as ap-
pears by the first verse of
this chapter.

(b) So the same Saint Peter in his first publick Sermon to his Nation in the Temple, after the sending of the holy Ghost (Act. 3. 19, &c.) exhorteth them to repent and

be converted *καὶ τὸ πλούτων τὸ ἀπαρνατόν αὐτὸν*, for the wash-
ing away of their sins, that so (εἴπεις αὐτοῖς) those times of
refreshing and restitution of all things which God had
spoken by the mouth of al his holy Prophets, might come,
which till then were to be suspended.

Object. But God could have hastened the Jewes con-
version, if it had pleased him.

Resp. But it stood with the economy of Gods justice, when the Jewes had rejected Christ, their expiation, to grant them this grace, until they should have fulfilled a time of penance for all the sins of their Nation, even from the first time they were a people, until the last de-
struction of Jerusalem. For since they would none of their pardon and attonement by Christ, (with respect unto whose coming God had so long spared them ; for all their expiation by sacrifice looked unto him) God would not hate them an ace of the judgment they had merited, but would visit all the former sins of their Nation upon them, from the golden Calf, until their crucifying, and finally, rejecting of their Messiah.

Verse 10.

But as for the manner of the
coming of this great day of

the Lord , it shall be suddenly and unawares , as a theif in the night , in which the heavens (c) with a crackling noise of fire shal pass away , & the *sōxāa* (c) or host of them shall melt with fervent heat ; the earth also and the works thereof shall be burned.

(c) What these Heavens are, and why I render *sōxāa* the host of them ; and how this conflagration is to be understood , I will shew when I have done my Paraphrase.

Vers. 11,12. Seeing then that all these things shal be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be, in all holy conversation and godlinesse , to make our selves fire-proof, and such as may abide the day of refining ? as namely becomeh those who by faith look for, and hasten the coming of the day of the Lord, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the host of them melt with fervent heat . For our life & conversation ought to be suitable to our faith, and we are so to walk, as if that were always present which by faith we look for.

Vers. 13. But this conflagration ended, (whatsoever those scoffers say, who question the promise of Christ's second coming) we look according to his promise Isa. 65. & 66. for a new heaven and a new earth, (that is, a new and refined state of the world) wherein righteousness shall dwell, according as the same Prophet saith, cap. 60. 20, 21. The Lord shall be thine everlasting light, & the dayes of thy mourning shall be ended, thy people also shall be all righteous, they shall inherit the land, or earth, for ever.

Vers. 14,15,16. Wherefore beloved (seeing that ye look for such things at his coming) be diligent that

that ye may be found in him in peace, without spot and
blameless, & account the long-suffering of God, in the
delay thereof to be salvation. Even as our beloved bro-
ther Paul also (one of the Apostles of our Lord, who
confirmeth these words of the holy Prophets) according
to the wisdom given unto him, hath written unto you,
enforcing the like exhortation unto holiness of life,
from this our faith and experience of the Lord Jesus
his appearing to judgment, which we now make unto
you : viz. Heb. 12. 14, 28, 29. As also in all his E-
pistles, speaking in them of these things, viz. Rom.
2, 4. coll. com. vers. 5, 6, 7, & 1 Cor. 1. 7, 8, & 3. 13.
2 Cor. 5, 9, 10, 11. in initio, & 7. 1. Phil. 1. 10, & 2.
15, 16. & cap. 3. 10. Colloſſ. 3. 4, 5. 1 Thess. 2. 12.
& 3. 13. denique 5. 23. 2 Thess. 1. 8, 11. 1 Tim. 6.
14, 15. Tit. 2. 12. 13.

How this *Conflagration* of the world

wherof Saint PETE R speaks, and especially of the Heavens, is to be understood.

For resolution of this question, I must premise some things, to make the way thereto the more easie: but odds wills to do on easy now ye reading

R. I. That the old Hebrew language wherein
the Scripture speaks, there is no one word to ex-
preſſe the compages of the ſuperior, and inferi-
or bodies, which we call *Mundus*, but theſe two
words *Heaven* and *Earth* (שׁמֶן כָּדָם) joyned to
and.

and put together, onely so that when Saint Peter saith, the World that then was, perished by waters; but the Heavens and Earth that are now, are reserved to fire:) He might as well have said according to his meaning, The Heavens and the Earth which then were, perished by waters, as the World that now is shall by fire. For the words *Heaven* and *Earth* joyned, imply no more in the one (according to the Scriptures notion) than the single word *Mundus* or *World* doth in the other, being applyed to the history of the great deluge: as also, a *New heaven* and a *New earth* is the same notion with that in our expression, where we say a *New World*; that is to say, *Nova rerum facies, nova rerum conditio*; which we otherwhile apply to very small, and even particular and domestical changes, when we say, Here is a new World; which the Hebrew would or might express, Herc is a new Heaven and a new Earth.

2 That it is not like that any other World, or Heaven and Earth, shall perish by fire, than such a one as heretofore perished by water: for so the *Antithesis* importeth, *wit.* The World, or Heaven and Earth that then was, perished by water, the Heaven and earth which now is, is reserved for a destruction by fire. Now the World which perished by water was no other than the sublunary World; the Heaven wherof is that which we call Aire, but the Scripture Heaven, which sublunary heaven, together with the earth, was marrred by that general deluge; and the creatures belonging to them both either wholly destracted, or marvell-

marvellously corrupted from that they were before: such a World therefore, and no other Heaven and earth, shall undergo the second deluge of fire for restauration, which before suffered the deluge of water for corruption.

3. Observe also, for the better understanding of Saint Peters meaning, That the word *σύρχειν* which we in this place are wont to turn Elements, is not like to be understood in the notion of the Greek Doctors, whose terms and notions the Scripture useth not; but otherwise divideth the World. Nay further, in this place it cannot be so understood, for that the Hebrew division of the World into Heaven and Earth is here expressed, and the *σύρχειν* distinguished from them both. But when the whole world is divided into Heaven and Earth *σύρχειν τὸν κόσμον*, by Earth is meant the Earthen Globe, which Saint Peter saith is *οὐατὴν σύρχειν*, and so the water and earth are both included in the sole name of Earth: In Heaven the Aire is included. Thus three of the Physical Elements are bestowed. The fourth is the Fire: but this is that which is to burn the *σύρχειν*, and so none of the *σύρχειν* to be burnt. And if any of these Elements could be exempted from this division into Heaven and Earth, besides the Fire, viz. the Aire, yet could not that, nor any of them alone be *σύρχειν* in Saint Peter: For *σύρχειν* notes more than one. It must needs therefore be, that *σύρχειν* here meaneth something else. Let us see if we can find out what it is. Mark then Saint Peters order, *πρῶτον σύρχειν τὸν κόσμον τὸν αὐτὸν ἐργαζόμενον*.

By

By which correspondence it should seeme that *συρχεῖα* should be some furniture belonging to *cælum*, as *τέρα* are the buildings & whole furniture of creatures belonging to *terra*; which furniture of both, but especially that of the *Heaven* the Scripture calls *ἄντλις* the host of them, Gen. 2.1. *The heavens & the earth were finished,* — *καὶ ἐγένετο* and all the host of them. LXX. *οὐρανὸς καὶ*. Vulg. *Ornatus eorum.* Nay, seeing the whole world is nothing else but the *heaven* and the *earth*, and what is contained in them, (i.e.) *exercitus eorum*: and seeing *heaven* and *earth* are both here distinctly named, and *τέρα* put for the host of the *earth*; it must needs be that *συρχεῖα*, named as distinct things from all three, should note the host of *heaven*: And so the meaning of Saint Peter should be, when he saith *οἱ ἀπόστολοι τὸν οὐρανὸν, the heavens and the host thereof;* or *τὰς ἀνταρτὰς οὐρανούς, as he says, γῆ καὶ ἡ ἀντὴρ ἡγεμονία, the earth and the works therein.* But how, will some man say, should *συρχεῖα* come to have this notion? I answer thus, The Hebrew verb *נִצְחָה* signifieth, *in ordine militari sto, incedo*, and so answers to the Greek verb *στέχω*, which is expounded, *ἐν τάξι στρατηγούμεναι*, i.e. *in ordine militari incedo*, *Vide Scap, ex Etymolog.* Accordingly the LXX. render the Hebrew *נִצְחָה* *στρατηγούμεναι*, i.e. *in præcinctu sto, instructa acie sto.* Now if the verb *נִצְחָה* signifie the same with the Greek *στέχω*, why may not the Hebrew Noun *נִצְחָה* (which we turn *exercitus*) be rendered *στρατηγῶν*; the Hellenists or Greekish Jews, as in other words so here following the Etymo-

Etymology from εὐχος, & having eye more to their own native language, than to the use of Greeke. It would be long to shew in how many words they, and the Greek Scriptures written according to their Dialect, use notions w^{ch} the Greek used not, (viz.) respecting some conformity or other in their own tongue. The works of the learned in sacred Criticisme are of late full of such observations, whereby many difficulties and obscurities in Scripture become clear and easie. Nevertheless the Gentile Greeks themselves use στρατος and στρατιος (which come of the same verbe εὐχος) in the same sense we plead for, viz. for *ordo militaris*, Military array; why may not then the Hellenists (so the *Greek Fathers are called) do so with στρατειον, being for the etymology every way as fit, seeing also they are otherwise wont to permute significations from vicinity of sound.

For a further confirmation of this notion of στρατειον I contend for, I will adde what I have met with to that purpose. Schickardus, a learned Professor of the Oriental languages, at Tabinen, in his *Bekinath happerushim*, pag. 44. hath discovered out of Rambans, or R. Moses ben Nachmans Preface in *Pernische hattarot*, two passages taken out of the Chaldee copy of the *Wisdom of Solomon*, which that Rabbi had seen: whereby the said Schickard provereth against St. Jerome, that the Greek is not the Original, but was translated out of Chaldee. The passages which this Ramban quoreth thence are cap. 7. 5, 6, 7. and part of the 8. And again, vers. 17, 18, 19, 20, 21. In the last of which quotations, because there is in the Greek ἐπεγειρονται, I greedily looked what word in the Chaldee answered here to επεγειρονται, which I found to be נְבָדָל, which those who have skill know to signify the Planets, 2d. signes or constellations of Heaven, as being the same with the Hebrew נְבָדָל. Στρατεια, therefore here are Stars and Planets,

* See th' Syrick Act. 9. 20. where
Ελληνισται
are turned Iudei
qui loquebantur Greece.

* have since
looked in the
Preface of

Ramban, where I found those Chaldee pas- fages mentioned, which the Rabbins trans- fatereth into he- brew, and for the Chaldee which answ- reth to

*εργειας
ελοχειας*
be renders

*מְשֻׁבָּח
מְלֹאת*

which I shall not need prove to be the host of the Ethereall Heaven: yea, and perhaps too, תִּלְכַּד and נְבִיא are derived of the verb בָּקַע, *ire*, as τυχεῖν is of τύχη. Now we know the Scriptures make mention of three Heavens; first, the Aire or sublunary Heaven: secondly, the Ethereall and starry Heaven: thirdly, the Heaven of Glory, or Emperall Heaven. Every of these Heavens have their host or army: the host of the heaven of glory, or the third, are the Angels and blessed Spirits: the host of the Ethereall heavens are the Stars and Planets: the host of the Aereal, or sublunary heaven, are either visible, as the clouds of heaven, μόλαι τὸν ὄπουδον, and other meteors, as also the rest of the creatures mansiōning therein, as the fowles of the heaven, μέλιτες τὸν ὄπουδον or invisible, viz. the wicked Spirits and Devils, whose Prince Satan, is called the Prince of the power of the Aire, Eph. 2. 2, and his host κορυφαῖτες, rulers of the world, i.e. the sublunary world, and τὰ τρυμαλία τὸν στρατὸν in τοῖς ἀπαρτίαις, wicked spirits in heavenly places, viz. in the lowest or sublunary heavens, Eph. 6. 12. And whether S. Paul, Gal. 4. 8, 9, and Col. 2. 8, &c. includes not some of those under his επικήρυξις, I cannot affirm: let the learned further consider it, when namely he speaks to Gentiles, and of Gentiles, and not Jewes.

Having hitherto prepar'd the way, let us now come closer home to S. Peter, whose words evidently import, that some of these heavens, or all of them, shal suffer a conflagration at the day of Christ. Not all of them, for, whoever put the Empyreal heaven into that reckoning? And for the Ethereal heaven, he that considereth the supreaminent nature and immensity thereof, and of those innumerable bodies therein, in regard of which the whole sublunary world is but a point or center; & that it no way can be proved that ever those bodies received any curse for mans sin, or contagion by the worlds deluge, or that any enemies of God dwell

dwell in them to pollute them: he that considereth this wil not easily be induced to believe that the fire of the day of judgement should burn them. It remaineth therefore that the sublunary heavens only, with their *στοχεῖα* are to be the subject of this conflagration.

These *heavens* (saith S. Peter) *αὐδιορύνω*, i. e. *solventur*, and their *στοχεῖα* shall melt with fervent heat: It is a Metaphor taken from the refining of metals, *qua igne solvantur ut purificentur*: so that *as οὐρανοὶ αὐδιορύνονται*, is as much as *Cæli igne adhibito conflagrabuntur*. This to be the meaning of *αὐδιορύνω* appears, because S. Peter himself interprets *solvit* to be *liquefieri*. For having in the tenth verse said *στοχεῖα αὐδιορύνω*, (i.e.) *solventur*, he in the twelfth verse repeating it sayes, *στοχεῖα μέσονται*, (i. e.) *liquefient*; Now *melting* is for refining and purifying. Nor is the word *καπνός* averse from this notion, the L X X. using *καπνός* for the Hebrew *אַשׁוֹר* as in the Psalms more than once: *The words of the Lord are as refined silver*, L X X. *ἀργυρός καπνωπός*, *Psal. 12.* and so elsewhere. But when the sublunary heaven shall be thus refined, even the Ethereal lights of the Stars, of the Sun and Moon, &c. will appear to those on earth much more glorious than now they do, as sending their rayes through a puret *Medium*; so that all the world to us-ward shall be as it were renewed.

As for *τρανσίνειν* (or *passing away*) verse 10. it is an Hebraisme, signifying any change, or going of a thing from the state wherein it was, and answers to the verbe *נָהַר*, which signifieth both *transire* and *permutari*, as *نَهَر* in Chaldianisme doth. And Schindler notes that *Psal. 102* the Arabick for *נָהַר* *mutabuntur*, hath *نَهَرَتْ*, *transi-
bunt*. In the twelfth verse it is expounded by *αὐδιορύνω*, but *αὐδιορύνω* I have already shewed is committuted with *τρανσίνειν*; they therefore all three of them signific one

and the same thing; and I see no reason why we should imagine a greater *emphasis* in παρελθονται for an utter abolition in the destruction by fire, than is before implied in ἀπώλοτο, when he spake of the destruction by water: οὐ τότε κόσμος (inquis) οὐ δικιάζοντος απάλει.

But what shall become of the invisible host, which I named as part of the τούχσα of this sublunary heaven, viz. those περιουσια τῆς τούχσας, the army of wicked and unclean spirits: shall the fire of the last judgement touch these? I answer: Though the operation of the fire shall not be upon them to burn them, yet shall they also suffer by this fiery judgement, being thereby to be exiled and dejected from those high mansions, and bestowed in some lower place: for so that of Jude seemeth to imply, *The Angels (saith he) which kept not their first estate, but left their own (or proper) habitation, he hath reserved to (be bound with) everlasting chaines of darkness, at the judgement of the great day.* Vide Piscat. in hunc locum.

And this seemes to me to be the most literal and unforced exposition of this description of Saint Peter, of the heaven and earths conflagration at the day of Christ, and so to be preferred before any other.

But if a Propheticall strain or scheme may here be admitted, there is another way of explication, which yet in the conclusion will come to the same purpose the former did, although the way thereto be not the same. And certainly our Saviour in the Gospel describing the coming of this day, useth a Propheticall expression: *The Sunne (saith he) shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the Starres shall fall from heaven, and the powers of heaven shall be shaken.* For if this be taken literally, whither shall the stars fall from heaven, which are either as big, or many times bigger than the globe of the earth, where shall be

room

room for them : if such a scheme there be suppos'd in St. Peters description, th' explication may be after this maner.

Mundus, or the *World*, (to omit other particular exceptions) is according to the Scriptures use, either *Mundus continens*, or *Mundus contentus*, (give me leave to use those termes for distinction sake:) By *Mundus continens* I mean the compages and frame of the Physical heaven & earth, wherein the rest of the creatures are contained: By *Mundus contentus*, the state or body of the inhabitants or Kingdoms of the earth. Now to whatsoever the notion of *Mundus* is appliable, there is also supposed to be an heaven and earth, as being the names and parts whereby the Scriptures express the *World*. The *heaven* then of this *Political world* is the sovereignty or sovereign part thereof, whose host and stars are the powers ruling in the *World*: In the highest place *Gods* and *Idols*; next, *Kings*, *Princes*, *Peers*, *Counsellours*, *Magistrates*, and other such lights shining in the Firmament. And at such a meaning and no other (it being an Oriental notion) may aime (for ought I can see) that supposed fastuous style of *Sapores King of Persia* to *Constantius the Emperour*; *Rex Regum Sapores, frater solis & luna, particeps (i.e. socius) syderum, Constantio fratri salutem*. But to go on: *Earth* is the *Pezantry* or *vulgar huminum*, together with the terrestrial creatures serving the use of man: Of such an Heaven, as this is, the Lord speaketh in the Prophecie of *Haggai*, cap. 2. v. 6. *Yet once it is a little while, and I will shake all Nations, and the desire of all Nations shall come.* And again v. 21. *I will shake the heavens and the earth, and I will overthrow the throne of Kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the Kingdoms of the Heathen, &c.* Of such an heaven and earth speaketh *Feremy*, c. 4. v. 23. *I beheld the earth, and it was without form and void, (וְהַבָּא וְהַמֵּה) and the heavens, & they had no light: viz. as if the World were turn'd into the old Chaos again, Gen. cap. 1. See the rest.*

rest which followeth. Of such Heavens & Earth speaketh the Lord in *Esay*, cap. 51. v. 15, 16. namely, of the Heavens and Earth of the World, or state of Israel. *I am* (saith he) *the Lord thy God, who divided the sea,* (to wit, the Red sea) *when the waters thereof roared, the Lord of Hosts in his name:* *And put my Word* (i.e. my Law) *in thy mouth, and covered thee in the shadow of my hand,* (i.e. protected thee in thy march to Canaan) *that I might plant the Heavens, and lay the foundations of the Earth,* (i.e. make thee a State, and build thee into a Political World) *and say unto Sion, thou art my people.* Of such a kind of Heaven speaks the same Prophet, cap. 34. v. 2, 4, 5. *The indignation of the Lord is upon all Nations, and his fury upon all their Armies, &c.* And all the Host of Heaven shall be dissolved, and the Heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll, and their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the Vine, and as a falling figge from the figge-tree. *For my sword shall be bathed in Heaven:* Behold it shall come down on Idumea, &c. See the rest, & know that this destruction of Edom is prophesied of in no lesse hyperbolical a strain by *Obadiah*, and *Jeremy* cap. 49. from v. 7. to 22. *Ezek.* 35. v. 4. & 25. 12. which I note, lest any man wondering at the hyperbole of this of *Esay*, should think it appliable only to the day of judgement. And that such schemes as these were usual to the Nations of the Orient, may appear not only by the Chymical Philosophy derived thence, (which makes heaven & earth & stars in every thing,) but from the testimony of *Moses Maimonides*, who (*more Nebochim part. 2. cap. 29.*) affirms that the Arabians in his time in their vulgar speech, when they would express that a man was fallen into some great calamity or adversity, used to say, *Caelum ejus super terram ejus accidit.* Compare *Lament.* 2. 1. No question these schemes were as familiar to them, as our Poets strains and expressions are to us, though of another genius: Ours are borrowed from fables, stories,

stories, places; theirs, more from the frame of the World, the Sunne, Moon, Stars, and Elements, &c.

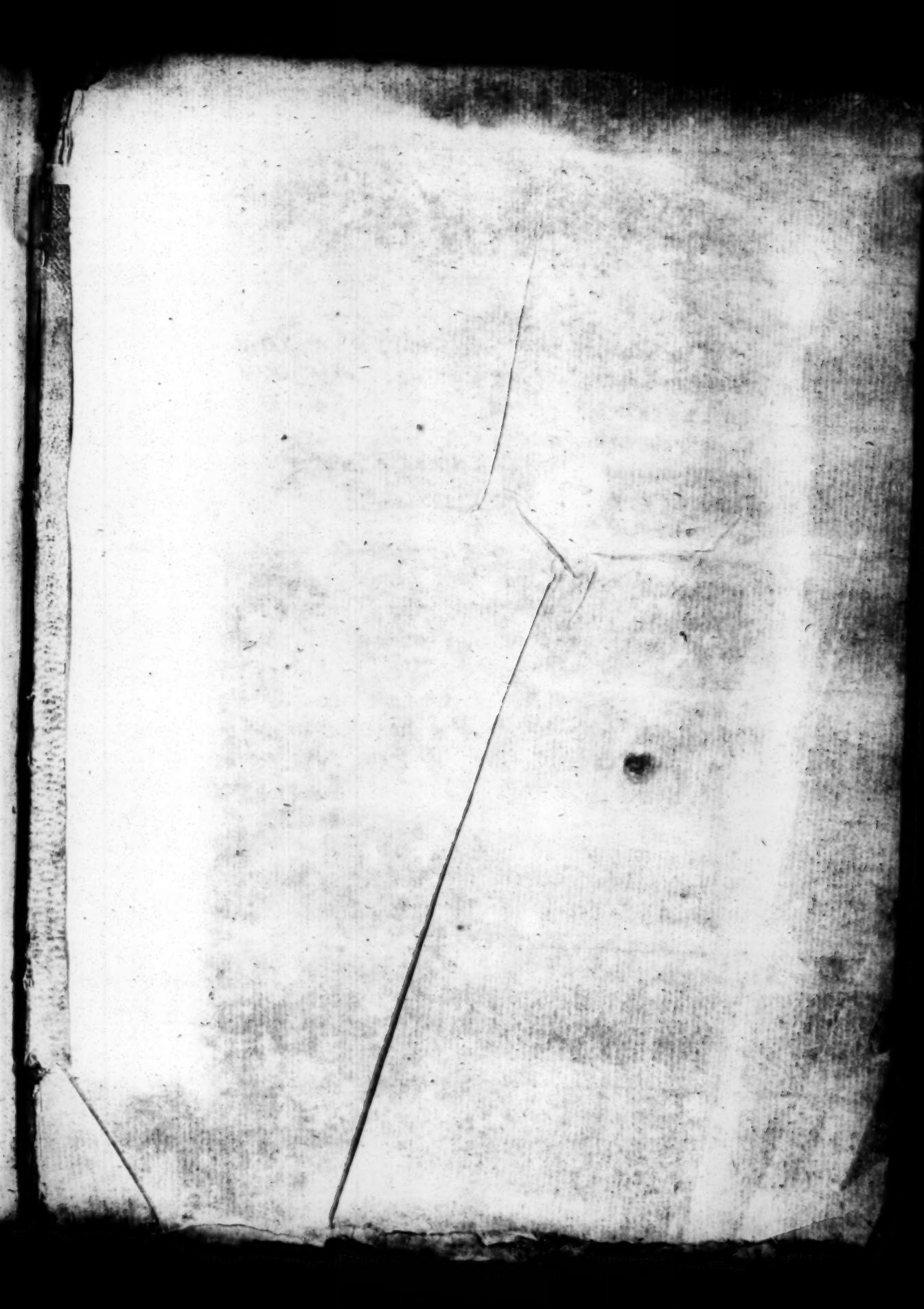
If such a notion of *Cælum* and *Terra* may have place in this place of *Peter*, (and why may he not uttering a Prophesie borrow a Poetical strain?) it may easily appear what Heaven and Earth the fire at Christ's second coming shall burn up and consume, *viz.* the heaven and the earth of the contained world, such as those which the former judgement by water over-whelmed and destroyed; the VVorkt of wicked states and men, high ones & low ones, princes and peasants, man & beast; according to that twice repeated passage, *Esay 2.11,17.* (which the ancient Jewes interpreted of the day of judgement) *The loftinesse of man shall be bowed down, & the haughtinesse of men shall be made low, & the Lord alone shal be exalted that day: And the Idols* (these are part of the host of heaven we see the Apostle speak of) *be shal utterly abolish.* And of such of the latter times heavens and *σοκη* as there be, it mattereth not though we understand an absolute destruction (*viz.* of so much as shall be burned) as was in the deluge of *Noah*. And so likewise of the earth and works thereof. But whereas by the universal deluge, though only the *Mundus consentius* perished, yet notwithstanding the *Mundus continuens* was therewith corrupted and depraved: In the destruction of fire it shall be otherwise, for the world of wicked ones being destroyed, the Heaven and the Earth which contained them shall be purged and refined, for the righteous to dwell therein. This Exposition I put, but in the second place, because where the proper sense of the letter may be kept, I prefer it before any other.

To conclude, if any there yet be, whom neither of the former expositions can satisfie, but will needs have the fire and burning here spoken of, to be that wherby the World is to be utterly annihilated; I could answer, that the day of

of judgement is a thousand yeers ; and this fire, though it be to be *is inimicula*, *in that day*, yet shall it not be in the beginning, but end thereof ; the beginning being but a destruction of the enemies of Christ, and the Kingdome of Satan, and then a restauration : The end, a destruction of the whole creature it self by utter annihilation ; and then St. Peters words, ver. 13. to be construed after this manner, *Thus howsoever the Heavens and the Earth shall at length be dissolved by fire, nevertheless before that shall be, we look for a new Heaven and a new Earth* (i. e. a new World or restauration) to precede this abolition, according to his promise, Esay, 65. & 66.

But such an exposition, methinks, would not suit so wel with that which I take to be St. Peters chiefest scope in this passage, nor with the words of the holy Prophets he pointeth at, which seem to speak only of such a fire, which should precede a restauration, and not of that which should cause an utter abolition of the World : And as concerning such an utter abolition of the whole frame of Heaven and Earth, after the Oeconomy of the Redemption & victory of Christ shall be finished, it seemeth to me a mystery which hath no bottome. Howsoever, I am not perswaded this place of St. Peter should mean any such thing. Those passages, Job 14.12. Psal. 102.26. and Apoc. 20.11. may seem to be of more moment. And if any such annihilation shall be, it stands more with reason it should be by the immediate power of God, without the instrument of any creature, than by fire ; and that he who at first brought it out of nothing without any creatures help, should reduce it to nothing again without the help of any creature.

Δοξα τῷ Θεῷ τῷ καταπλόκῳ.





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